

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 175989

NODIS

CHEROKEE EYES ONLY FOR BRZEZINSKI

FOLLOWING REPEAT TEL AVIV 5534 ACTION SECSTATE DATED JUL 27:

QTE:S E C R E T TEL AVIV 5534

NODIS CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, US

SUBJECT: ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS

REF: STATE 173913

1. I SAW DAYAN IN JERUSALEM IN LATE AFTERNOON OF
JULY 26 AND CONVEYED FULLY YOUR MESSAGE AS CONTAINED
IN REFTEL. HZ TOOK CAREFUL NOTES. HE WAS CLEARLY
DISAPPOINTED THAT YOU WERE NOT ABLE TO ENCOURAGE HIS
APPROACH.

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2. IN RESPONSE TO MY PRESENTATION, DAYAN MADE FOLLOWING
POINTS:

A. HE STRESSED THAT IT WAS INACCURATE TO DESCRIBE THE
PROBLEM AS ONE OF DEALING WITH POLITICAL PRESSURES ON
BEGIN WITH WHICH HE COULD NOT COPE. DAYAN SAID THAT
IF BEGIN WISHED TO DECLARE A MORATORIUM ON NEW SETTLE-

MENTS, HE CLEARLY HAD THE POLITICAL AUTHORITY TO OBTAIN SUPPORT FROM HIS COALITION AND HIS CABINET. UNFORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, AS I KNEW, BEGIN HIMSELF BELIEVES THAT SETTLEMENTS SHOULD CONTINUE, AND HE HAD MADE NO RPT NO COMMITMENT TO THE PRESIDENT AS TO WHAT HIS RESPONSE WOULD BE TO THE PRESIDENT'S APPEAL. DAYAN SAID IT WAS CERTAINLY POSSIBLE THAT BEGIN WOULD DECIDE TO DO AS THE PRESIDENT HAS URGED; HOWEVER, HE BELIEVED IT MORE LIKELY THAT BEGIN WOULD DECIDE THAT SOME SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY WOULD HAVE TO CONTINUE.

B. DAYAN REITERATED THAT THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT HAD NO PLAN TO ANNEX OR EXTEND ISRAELI LAW TO THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES SO LONG AS NEGOTIATIONS ARE IN PROQSPECT. HE AND THE PRIME MINISTER HAD BOTH GIVEN US ASSURANCES ON THIS POINT, AND THEREFORE THE ARAB FEARS CITED IN YOUR MESSAGE ABOUT "AN ESSENTIALLY ANNEXATIONALIST POLICY" COULD BE PUT TO REST.

C. HE REMINDED ME THAT THE ELECTORAL PLATFORM OF THE LABOR ALIGNMENT HAD CONTAINED A MUCH MORE SWEEPING PROVISION ON THE SETTLEMENTS ISSUE THAN THE LIKUD PLATFORM. BUT MORE IMPORTANT, NONE OF THE MAJOR PARTIES IN THEIR CAMPAIGN PLATFORMS HAD ADVOCATED A CESSATION IN SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY.

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D. HE AND THE PRIME MINISTER UNDERSTOOD AND ACCEPT THAT IN THE U.S. VIEW THESE SETTLEMENTS ARE ILLEGAL, AND THEY DO NOT EXPECT US NOT TO SAY SO PUBLICLY. HOWEVER, BEGIN HAD SAID IN WASHINGTON VERY CLEARLY THAT "NO SETTLEMENT WILL BE AN OBSTACLE TO A PEACE TREATY." DAYAN SAID HE WANTED TO UNDERSCORE THIS COMMITMENT AND TO SAY VERY PRECISELY HIMSELF THAT IF ANY EVENTUAL BOUNDARY ESTABLISHED IN A PEACE AGREEMENT LEAVES ANY SETTLEMENTS OUTSIDE OF ISRAEL'S NEW BORDERS THEN THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT WOULD REMOVE THEM. WITH THIS CLEAR COMMITMENT THAT FURTHER SETTLEMENTS WOULD NOT IMPLY ANY PRECONDITIONS FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS, IT THEN SEEMED THAT WHAT IS BEING ASKED OF THE ISRAELIS IS A KIND OF UNACCEPTABLE PRECONDITION. TO REQUIRE THAT ALL SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY CEASE IN ORDER THAT THERE BE A PEACE CONFERENCE SEEMED TO DAYAN TO BE JUST THIS SORT OF "PRECONDITION." HE THEN MUSED THAT ONE MIGHT NEXT HEAR THAT THE ARABS WOULD NOT COME TO THE PEACE CONFERENCE UNLESS THE ISRAELIS STOPPED ALL NEW CONSTRUCTION IN THE ARAB SECTION OF JERUSALEM.

3. AT THIS POINT IN WHAT WAS CLEARLY BECOMING A STICKY CONVERSATION, I TOOK THE OFFENSIVE TO REBUT THIS LAST LINZ OF ARGUMENT. I MADE CLEAR THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD NOT POSED THE ISSUE TO THE PRIME MINISTER AS A PRECONDITION. RATHER HE HAD CITED SETTLEMENT ACTIVITIES BETWEEN NOW AND GENEVA AS SOMETHING WHICH MIGHT WELL MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE U.S. TO DO WHAT ISRAEL HAD ASKED US TO DO: THAT IS TO HELP ORGANIZE A PEACE CONFERENCE SO THAT THE ISRAELIS AND ARABS COULD COME TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. THE ISSUE WAS NOT ONE OF PECONDITIONS BY ANYONE; IT WAS RATHER ONE OF POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC SENSITIVITIES ON THE ARAB SIDE IN A VERY DELICATE MOMENT. I STRESSED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD ASKED FOR A MORATORIUM, AND DREW AN
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ANALOGY TO BEGIN'S REQUEST TO THE PRESIDENT FOR A SIMILAR MORATORIUM ON PUBLIC EXCHANGES ABOUT SUBSTANTIVE NEGOTIATING ISSUES BETWEEN NOW AND GENEVA. I SAID THAT PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF DAYAN'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT THAT BEGIN HAS AMPLE POLITICAL AUTHORITY TO ENFORCE SUCH A MORATORIUM, HIS FAILURE TO DO SO COULD NOT HELP BUT BE OF DEEP CONCERN TO THE PRESIDENT.

4. WE THEN DISCUSSED FURTHER WHAT SEEMZD TO BE IN PROSPECT. DAYAN TOLD ME THAT SHARON IS PUSHING FOR GOVERNMENT APPROVAL OF 12 NEW SETTLEMENTS, MANY OF WHICH ARE NEAR THE CENTER OF THE WEST BANK AND SOME CLOSE TO HEAVILY POPULATED AREAS. HE AGAIN ARGUED THAT THE PROPOSAL WHICH HE HAD PUT TO YOU WAS INTENDED TO DIVERT THIS EFFORT INTO THE LEAST PROVOCATIVE POSSIBLE FRAMEWORK. HE STILL THOUGHT THAT HIS IDEA WOULD BE SEEN BY THE ARAB LEADERS AS RELATIVELY NON-PROVOCATIVE SINCE NO NEW LAND AREA WOULD COME UNDER JEWISH CONTROL. BUT HE SAID HE WAS NOT PREPARED TO PUSH HIS IDEA WITH THE CABINET IN LIGHT OF YOUR RESPONSE.

5. THE CONVERSATION CONCLUDED WITH MY AGAIN URGING THAT PRIME MINISTER BEGIN BE RESPONSIVE TO THE PRESIDENT'S REQUEST FOR A MORATORIUM AND TO TAKE FULL ACCOUNT OF THE ENORMOUS DIFFICULTIES YOU FACE ON YOUR TRIP TO BRING THE ARABS TO THE PEACE TABLE, EVEN ASSUMING THAT THIS SETTLEMENTS ISSUE DOES NOT BECOME AN ADDITIONAL EXPLOSIVE ELEMENT TO DISRUPT YOUR EFFORTS. DAYAN SAID HE WOULD REPORT FULLY TO BEGIN LAST NIGHT BEFORE TODAY'S CABINET MEETING, AND PERHAPS BEGIN WOULD DECIDE TO DO WHAT THE PRESIDENT HAD ASKED. BUT HE WAS OBVIOUSLY VERY DOUBTFUL THAT THIS WOULD BE THE OUTCOME.

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6. AS I WAS LEAVING, EVRON TOOK ME ASIDE TO SAY THAT HE HAD LEARNED ONLY AFTER THE FACT OF DAYAN'S PROPOSAL TO YOU. HE SAID HE HAD IMMEDIATELY TOLD DAYAN YOU WOULD NEVER AGREE, BECAUSE HE REALIZED THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT COULD NEVER RUN THE RISK OF ENCOURAGING ANY FORM OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN THE TERRITORIES AND SUBSEQUENTLY HAVING THAT ENCOURAGEMENT COME IN SOME FORM TO PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE. I MADE NO COMMENT, EXCEPT TO SAY HOWEVER THAT I HOPED VERY MUCH THAT BEGIN AND DAYAN REALIZED THE IMPORTANCE THE PRESIDENT ATTACHED TO THIS QUESTION. LEWIS UNQTE VANCE

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